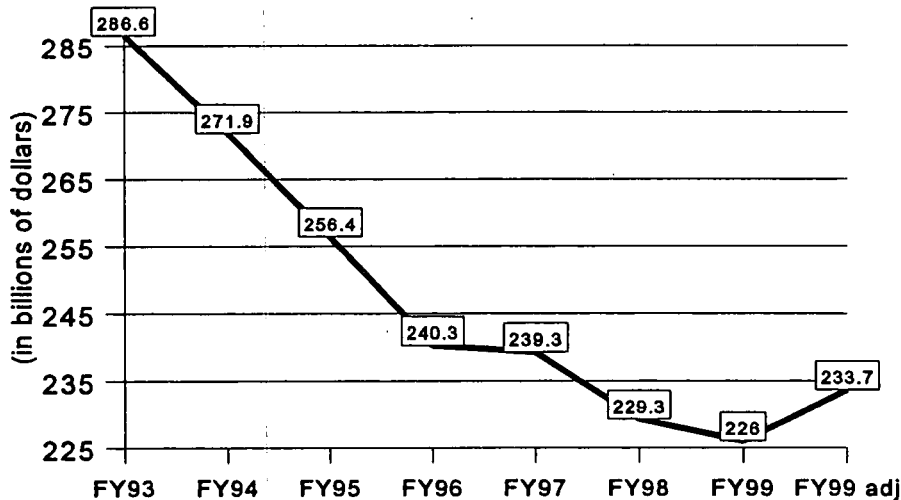


October 16, 1998

Republican Congress Reverses Clinton Attack on Defense Spending

National Defense Outlays 1993-1999

(in constant FY92 dollars)



* FY98 and FY99 are estimates

Source: OMB, President's FY99 Budget Historical Tables, pages 108-9

- Beginning in FY 1996, the Republican Congress has consistently provided defense funding *above* the Clinton Administration's budget request.
- Even so, real defense spending *still* continued to decline, as it has every year since Bill Clinton entered the White House in 1993.
- The current \$9 billion emergency spending appropriation for defense and intelligence, as demanded by the Republican Congress, is the first real defense spending *increase* since Clinton has been in office.
- Without this increase, Clinton's proposed spending for FY 1999 would have been the *lowest* in real terms (\$226 billion) since Carter's FY 1979 outlay of \$221.9 billion (in constant 1992 dollars).

The Clinton Administration's slashes in defense spending — coupled with a propensity for undertaking ever more military deployments, many of them "nontraditional" missions of questionable relevance to national defense — has brought the U.S. military to the brink of a readiness disaster:

- Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Hugh Shelton admitted recently that, "there is no question that more frequent deployments affect readiness." [2/3/98]
- Meanwhile, the Clinton Administration sends U.S. soldiers on more nontraditional missions than ever before: "... From continuing operations in Bosnia, Haiti and the Persian Gulf, to conducting contingency operations like noncombatant evacuations in Albania, Algeria — and Africa, the demand for military presence and capabilities has been very high." [Shelton, 9/29/98]
- According to Admiral J.L. Johnson, Chief of Naval Operations, "We've responded to some 108 contingencies or national taskings in the past 102 months, with just 15 in the last six months alone. . . . [S]ince 1992, our ship numbers have come down 31 percent and our at-sea time has gone up 26 percent. No decrease in this op tempo is foreseen." [9/29/98]
- U.S. forces are spending more time repairing aging equipment — time that should be spent in training. At the same time, the equipment itself is unavailable for training: "Time needed by our units for training in the field is being spent in the motor pools, hangars, and armories. Our commanders are finding it more and more difficult to train their units because their equipment is 'deadlined' or evacuated for repair." [Gen. Charles Krulak, Commandant of the Marine Corps, letter to Senator McCain, 9/15/98]
- A lack of spare parts for aircraft (including jet fighters, radar jamming planes, and cargo planes) has forced squadrons to cannibalize needed parts from other aircraft. Last year, before an Air Force F-16 squadron could fly to Saudi Arabia, crewmen had to cannibalize four other F-16s from other units and borrow three planes. [*San Diego Union Tribune*, 3/7/98]

The Republican Congress, in providing essential emergency funding for the U.S. armed forces, is heeding the warning of America's top military chiefs:

"If we do not reverse these trends through substantial and sustained funding of our forces, our concern that's expressed today I believe will rapidly turn into a readiness crisis." [Gen. Michael Ryan, Air Force Chief of Staff, 9/29/98]

"Without relief, we will see a continuation of our downward trend in readiness..." [Gen. Shelton, 9/29/98]

Staff Contacts: Dr. Yvonne Bartoli, Dr. J.T. Young, 224-2946